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Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1990

SUMMARY

The present report, prepared by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), presents an overview of the activities of ACC and its subsidiary machinery in 1990. The report contains a foreword by the Secretary-General, the Chairman of ACC, and four sections dealing with different aspects of the work of ACC. The first section relates the actions taken by ACC with regard to the major substantive issues to which priority was given during 1990: development and international economic cooperation; the impact of recent evolution in East-West relations; African economic recovery and development; environment and development; drug abuse control; women and development; and operational activities for development. The second section concerns programme issues, while the third is devoted to financial, administrative and personnel issues. Other matters, including action taken by ACC regarding the prevention and control of AIDS, the International Conference on Nutrition, the Chernobyl accident and assistance to Namibia, are dealt with in the final section of the report. The report also has four annexes and two addenda. The annexes contain lists of ACC decisions, reports and statements submitted by ACC to intergovernmental bodies, meetings convened under ACC auspices and documents issued by ACC in 1990. The first addendum contains information on the programmes and resources of the organizations of the United Nations system, while the second contains brief summaries of the activities in 1990 of the subsidiary bodies of ACC and of the ad hoc bodies convened under its auspices.

Development and international economic cooperation remained priority concerns of ACC in 1990. A goal of ACC was to ensure that the organizations of the system contributed in an effective manner to the successful conclusion of important intergovernmental negotiations and deliberations dealing with these issues. ACC welcomed the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries (Assembly resolution S-18/3, annex, of 1 May 1990) adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session and was encouraged by the adoption by consensus of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (Assembly resolution 45/199, annex, of 21 December 1990). The emphasis on human development issues was particularly appreciated by ACC. The outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (see A/CONF.147/Misc.9/Add.1 and Corr.1) in which the organizations of the system had actively participated, was reviewed by ACC and the necessary follow-up actions were discussed. ACC stressed the importance of a balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations. As in recent years, ACC was again preoccupied with the problem of the debt burden which is hampering the development of a majority of developing countries. Regarding issues such as these, there has been useful cooperation among all parts of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions.

ACC considered the impact of the recent evolution in East-West relations, particularly their economic implications. The transitions currently under way in Eastern European countries were reviewed by ACC. The role of United Nations organizations in facilitating the process of change was highlighted as was the lack of resources to fully respond to requests that were being received. ACC also considered the impact of changes in East-West relations on multilateral cooperation. ACC expressed its determination to ensure that the international community continue to give priority to those developing countries in most need of assistance.

The economic situation in Africa continued to be a matter of serious concern to ACC. ACC reviewed major initiatives and actions undertaken by the United Nations system in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (Assembly resolution S-13/2, annex, of 1 June 1986). ACC found that appreciable progress had been made by the United Nations system in the implementation of the Programme of Action. But considering the development challenges being faced by African countries, ACC concluded that coordinated support by the international community, and the United Nations system in particular, must be accelerated beyond the Programme of Action.

In 1990 ACC devoted considerable attention to a range of issues related to the environment, including preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, as well as world climate change. Regarding the Conference, ACC expressed its strong commitment to and support for the Conference and recommended that its members continue to contribute actively to the preparatory process. ACC underlined the need for the preparatory process and the Conference itself to address both development

and environment issues in a balanced and interrelated manner. ACC was kept informed of the activities and results of the deliberations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as well as the Second World Climate Conference. ACC supported the activities of WMO and UNEP in preparation for negotiations for the development of a framework convention on climate change.

ACC conducted a wide-ranging review of the latest developments in strengthening international cooperation to fight drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It was recognized that further new and important responsibilities devolved upon many parts of the United Nations system as a result of the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly (resolution S-17/2, annex, of 23 February 1990). ACC prepared the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (E/1990/39 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add.1) and noted the resource gaps which must be bridged if the United Nations system is to fulfil the responsibilities assigned to it in the Plan.

In 1990 ACC reviewed the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. 1/ ACC adopted a statement in which it recognized the need for the international community to accelerate the pace of progress in the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies. It considered that the advancement of women should be an integral part of other system-wide priorities in the 1990s. Among other objectives, emphasis was placed on the improvement of the status of women within the respective secretariats and on improved monitoring of the impact of programmes on women.

Regarding operational activities for development, the present report provides details on the activities of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities). A focus of attention has been on efforts to improve the overall coherence, cost effectiveness and impact of operational activities, with particular emphasis on field level coordination arrangements. The implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/221 has been a major priority of the Committee.

ACC, in response to requests from Member States for more comprehensive and transparent information on the activities of organizations of the United Nations, decided in 1990 to reconvene its Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters). Among the most important tasks assigned to it was the question of providing in the ACC annual overview report information on the programmes and resources of organizations. In consultation with CCAQ (FB), a prototype of such a report was developed and presented to the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and ACC which found the prototype to be an acceptable basis on which to proceed. The first of these reports is found in addendum I.

With regard to personnel issues, two aspects of the comprehensive review of conditions of employment of staff in the Professional and higher categories were the focus of attention of ACC and its subsidiary body, CCAQ (PER). These were the completion of the review itself and the implementation of decisions taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/198 of 21 December 1989.

The functioning of the International Civil Service Commission also was a focus of attention. Five areas that would form the centre of the report of ACC to the General Assembly in 1991 on the functioning of the Commission were identified.

The ACC subsidiary body dealing with financial issues, CCAQ (FB), in 1990 concentrated on the financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system, budgeting methods, the cost of health insurance and support costs. The cash position of a number of organizations continued to be critical during most of the year of 1990, making it necessary for them to take exceptional financial management measures and, more disturbingly, to curtail activities. In its decision 1990/6, ACC reiterated its profound concern regarding the mounting arrears in contributions to the regular budgets of the organizations of the United Nations system. These arrears, it was noted, have serious programmatic consequences and have jeopardized international cooperation in the political, economic, technical and social fields.

FOREWORD

During the past year the profound changes which have resulted in the ending of the Cold War have continued to shape international affairs. The events themselves have been universally welcomed even if the ramifications of them are not yet fully understood. The events in the Gulf indeed indicate that conflicts, with all their devastating consequences, are likely to continue to plague mankind unless their root causes are addressed and lasting solutions found.

It is clear that the United Nations system will play a far more significant and central role in world affairs than has heretofore been the case. Recently, we have witnessed a renewed emphasis on and greater support for the role of the United Nations in the political field. As I have said on other occasions, it is equally important that the work of the United Nations system in the economic and social areas also be strengthened in order to address effectively the complex global problems confronting the increasingly interdependent family of nations.

The scope and magnitude of the problems confronting the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in their transition from centrally planned economies into ones that are market-oriented are complex and unprecedented. Organizations of the United Nations system have begun to extend to those countries technical advice and assistance in order for them to address not only their economic problems but, equally important, the severe social problems that emanate from such a transition.

Moreover, the changes that have been taking place in those countries have a significant impact on the development of developing countries. In the immediate term, there may already be a diversion of scarce resources from the developing countries to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The transition, however, opens up opportunities for increased economic cooperation between those countries and the developing countries. The United Nations should assist in exploiting those opportunities.

Another major preoccupation of the organizations of the United Nations system has been the conflict in the Gulf that has just ended. Organizations have been mobilized to provide the necessary humanitarian and technical assistance. The international community must seize the opportunity to move forward to work on lasting security arrangements in the region, of which the reconstruction and the development needs of countries in the region must become an integral part.

There are a number of lessons for international economic cooperation that we should learn from the Gulf conflict. One of them is the glaring need for a sound international energy policy. Such a policy is not only essential for economic security and sustained development but also for the protection of the environment. I intend to consult with my colleagues in the United Nations system and to suggest that this important matter be seriously addressed by the organizations.

Another lesson relates to the need for the international community to provide timely humanitarian and emergency assistance. It is evident that in the years to come the need for humanitarian and emergency assistance will increase. The concerted efforts of the system are critical for the timely and efficient delivery of such assistance. This matter will be addressed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the coming months, and I will put forward some recommendations for the consideration of Governments.

The Gulf crisis and the changing situation in Eastern and Central Europe have also brought to the forefront of international attention problems relating to migration - a question of increasing importance for all countries as the world becomes more and more interdependent. Organizations of the system are examining carefully the many different dimensions of the problem in order to make the requisite preparation for discussion by intergovernmental bodies.

I have served as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) now for nearly 10 years. In that time the organizations of the United Nations system have demonstrated on a number of occasions that they are capable at both the conceptual and operational levels of formulating and implementing coherent responses to international problems. I think, in particular, of the work of the organizations of the system regarding structural adjustment, which has resulted in an international consensus that the human dimension must be adequately taken into account. The response of the organizations to the emergency situation in Africa and to the global AIDS pandemic has likewise demonstrated the potential of the United Nations system to be of timely and effective assistance to Member States.

At the same time it must be admitted that progress in some areas has not been as rapid as would be desirable. I would like to take this opportunity to take stock of our development experiences with a view to putting forward some thoughts as to the main priorities for the future. We have seen in the past decade a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor both among and within nations. This is true for the majority of developing countries, whose populations have suffered an absolute decline in their standard of living, as well as for those developing countries in Asia which have enjoyed relatively healthy growth. The United Nations system must intensify efforts to ensure that assistance is not only designed for the poor but actually reaches them. Greater attention must also be paid to human development and popular participation. This should be another focus of the efforts of organizations of the system in the coming decade.

Another area deserving particular attention relates to the operational activities of the organizations of the United Nations system. This question has been widely discussed in recent years, at both the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels. Nevertheless, considerable scope exists for achieving greater coherence in the system's activities at the country level and for closer collaboration with national Governments and non-governmental organizations in the pursuit of developmental objectives. I am convinced that this is vital for maintaining and strengthening the confidence of the international community in the capacity of the United Nations to provide development assistance.

In the years to come a focus on sustainable development will be particularly important. The overwhelming problems of poverty and underdevelopment must receive adequate attention as the preparations proceed for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992. Governments must exercise the necessary political farsightedness to make the difficult but necessary decisions to safeguard our planet. Organizations of the system must also be fully mobilized to act in a concerted manner. I am heartened by the active cooperation that organizations of the system have extended, through ACC and other mechanisms, to the preparatory process of the Conference. But I recognize that more needs to be done to improve coordination among agencies. Clearer guidelines by Member States would be helpful.

Last year witnessed a number of important developments relating to drug abuse control activities. The General Assembly decided to consolidate the analytical, operational and funding capacities of the United Nations in order to provide more coherent support to the international community in fighting this problem. This, together with the adoption of the system-wide action plan, provides us with new arrangements and instruments for concerting our efforts. I am confident that positive lessons will be drawn from this to ensure improved coordination and efficiency in the future in other areas.

ACC plays a crucial role in all of these areas. It is imperative that the resources and capacities of the United Nations system as a whole be applied in a coherent and effective manner to the multitude of issues identified for priority attention by the intergovernmental bodies of the system. The specialized agencies and United Nations programmes cannot fulfil their own mandates in the absence of cooperation and genuine coordination.

The experience of the past 10 years has clearly demonstrated that effective international action through the United Nations requires the political and financial support of Member States. Among the most important functions of ACC is the maintenance and strengthening of the United Nations common system of personnel policies and practices. The easing of ideological divisions among Member States provides a welcome opportunity to build an international civil service fully in keeping with the relevant provisions of the Charter. The support of Member States is critical for the success of such an endeavour.

A strong and effective independent international civil service must furthermore provide competitive conditions of service and remuneration. This necessarily has financial implications that need to be addressed squarely by Member States. As the organizations of the system have repeatedly pointed out, a viable system of international cooperation cannot be built without consistent and reliable financial support from Member States. As the ACC report indicates, the financial position of a number of organizations continues to be critical. The mounting arrears of contributions to regular budgets have quite serious programmatic consequences.

During the past several years a renewed emphasis has been placed on the need to strengthen system-wide coordination. ACC has taken measures to improve the effectiveness of existing coordination instruments, to enhance the functioning of its subsidiary machinery and to provide Member States with more comprehensive and transparent information on the programmes and resources of the organizations of the system.

The members of ACC recognize that such steps are only initial and that more needs to be done to meet the challenges of the future. The organizations of the United Nations system, working collectively through ACC, are determined that the changes that have already been introduced will provide a foundation upon which the capacities of the system as a whole can be further enhanced.

Given the decentralized and pluralistic nature of the United Nations system, coordination is a complex undertaking. The differences in perception regarding the purposes and most appropriate means of achieving coordination were examined at the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Planning and Coordination and ACC, held in October of last year. The open and candid dialogue was most useful in building a common understanding of what coordination is and what it entails.

It must be remembered that improved coordination is not a goal in itself. For the United Nations to be effective in the coming period and for the vision of the Charter to be realized, institutions and procedures must be able to respond to changing requirements. Informal coordination, nurtured by a "culture of coordination", is sometimes the most effective means to stimulate collective action.

In these areas as well as others, I am confident that ACC will continue to respond to the challenges of the present as well as the future and make every effort to carry out effectively the tasks assigned to it by Member States.

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List of abbreviations

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ACCIS	Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems
CCAQ (FB)	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions)
CCAQ (PER)	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions)
CCSQ (OPS)	Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities)
CCSQ (PROG)	Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters)
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
Habitat	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
IDA	International Development Association
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JUNIC	Joint United Nations Information Committee
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRO	Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNU	United Nations University
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

I. MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION IN 1990

A. Development and international economic cooperation

1. The state of international economic cooperation and the prospects for growth and advancement in the developing countries remained priority concerns of ACC in 1990. It was noted that the present era was characterized by a number of hopeful signs. The relaxation of political tensions and the restructuring of political and economic systems in Eastern Europe had created an atmosphere in which progress on many fronts is possible. In the economic and social areas there had been a perceptible narrowing of differences relating to economic philosophies and a turn towards more pragmatic approaches to development.

2. At the same time, ACC remained gravely concerned that, in spite of levels of affluence never witnessed before in certain parts of the world, gaps in economic and social well-being of people around the world have been widening. For the majority of the population of the world there continued to be alarming deterioration in the quality of life. In the absence of a meaningful economic dialogue, key and central problems in the international economy such as the question of international indebtedness, the net transfer of financial resources from developing countries, low commodity prices, restrictions in the international trading regime and the level and magnitude of world-wide poverty remained to be resolved.

3. A major concern of ACC in 1990 was to ensure that the organizations of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, contributed in an effective and timely manner to the successful conclusion of important intergovernmental negotiations and deliberations dealing with these questions.

4. ACC welcomed the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session. The Declaration addressed many of the most pressing issues confronting the international community in the economic and social areas. It recognized the need to strengthen national policies and to ensure a supportive external environment. ACC was particularly gratified that the Declaration confirmed the unique role which the United Nations must play in an integrated consideration of economic and social issues, as well as the indispensable contribution to development being provided by the specialized agencies. ACC emphasized that a great effort was required to reach more detailed understandings in several areas covered by the Declaration and then to translate these agreements into action.

5. Over the past several years ACC has been actively involved in the preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. The adoption by consensus of the Strategy by the

General Assembly at its forty-fifth session was considered a landmark by ACC. ACC was particularly pleased that the strategy placed emphasis on issues of human development and recognized the importance of sectoral contributions. A major priority for ACC in the future will be to ensure that the organizations of the system contribute in a coherent and effective way to the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Strategy and the monitoring of their attainment.

6. ACC has also over the past several years devoted considerable attention to the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. At its first regular session of 1990 ACC adopted a statement on the Conference (ACC decision 1990/1), in which it noted with satisfaction the progress made in the preparations for the Conference. The statement indicated that the number of least developed countries had increased and that their economic and social situation was a matter of concern. The international community was called upon to agree on a realistic and effective programme of action for the next decade to reverse the present trend of deteriorating living standards. At its second regular session for 1990, ACC reviewed the successful outcome of the Conference, in which the organizations of the system had actively participated, and discussed the necessary arrangements for the required follow-up actions.

7. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations was discussed by ACC at both of its regular sessions of 1990. ACC stressed the importance of a balanced outcome that would preserve and strengthen the multilateral trading system, enable trade to be liberalized and increase the market access for the exports of developing countries to ensure that they were not further marginalized.

8. During 1990 ACC was encouraged by a variety of developments indicating a greater awareness of the importance of issues related to human development. The publication in 1990 of the first Human Development Report was in this context welcomed by ACC. The successful outcome of the World Summit for Children, (see A/45/625, annex), and the wide public interest this gathering generated, was seen by ACC as an extremely significant step in ensuring that greater emphasis would in the future be given to issues such as those raised at the Summit. In 1990 the organizations of the system intensified their efforts to collaborate more closely on social issues particularly regarding the social impact of structural adjustment and other types of economic programmes.

9. As in past years ACC continued to be preoccupied with the problem of the debt burden, which is hampering the development of a majority of developing countries. ACC received a full and comprehensive briefing on the debt problématique. In the discussion at ACC the need for a comprehensive and lasting solution to the debt problem was underlined. ACC noted that the debt problem was related to some of the other major threats facing the international community, which made the quest for a solution and genuine debt relief even more urgent. ACC welcomed the report of the Personal Representative on Debt of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bettino Craxi (A/45/380

and Corr.1, annex), and expressed the hope that his proposals would be given the most serious consideration.

10. At its second regular session of 1990, ACC was apprised of the economic consequences of the crisis in the Gulf, including actions taken or contemplated by United Nations organizations in the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Security Council and which relate to Article 50 of the Charter.

B. Impact of recent evolution in East-West relations

11. At both of its sessions in 1990, ACC considered the impact of the recent evolution in East-West relations. ACC was particularly concerned with the economic and other implications of these sudden and far-reaching political developments. The dramatic changes were undoubtedly of profound significance and would to an increasing extent influence developments in a variety of areas in the future.

12. However, the outcome and timing of changes in Eastern Europe remain uncertain and it is still too early to assess their impact. The consequences of the reforms being undertaken in Eastern European countries and of the changes in East-West relations are far from clear. Certainly the changes have added to the existing climate of uncertainty being experienced by developing countries.

13. ACC reviewed and discussed the economic and other changes currently under way in Eastern European countries. The role of United Nations organizations in facilitating the process of change was highlighted. Various initiatives undertaken by individual organizations were described. Some sectors in which assistance from United Nations organizations could be particularly effective were identified. The lack of sufficient resources to respond fully and adequately to the requests that had been received was a major difficulty encountered by the organizations.

14. It was noted that as the post-war divisions that had heretofore characterized the European scene became irrelevant, new or revamped institutions and organizations to serve the needs of a new and more open Europe would be required. The role to be played by the United Nations and its affiliated organizations in this regard would need to be carefully considered.

15. Another major focus of attention for ACC was the impact of changes in East-West relations on multilateral cooperation. ACC was aware of the concerns of many developing countries that their own development prospects would be adversely affected by the diversion of attention and resources to Eastern Europe. ACC expressed its determination to ensure that the international community continue to give priority to those countries in greatest need of assistance. It was noted that while the economic benefits of the changes in East-West relations could be considerable, in the short-term the impact could well be negative. The general improvement in the political

climate and the greater prominence accorded to human rights were, however, positive developments with an immediate impact.

16. ACC was acutely conscious of the urgent tasks to be performed by international organizations as a result of the widespread changes that were taking place in Eastern Europe and in East-West relations. There was a need to monitor and analyse those changes so that their impact could be better understood. United Nations organizations also provide highly appropriate forums to spell out and evaluate the pros and cons of different types of socio-economic organizations and development strategies. This responsibility will need to be carried out in a manner which should be as universal and candid as possible. ACC looked forward to the discussion of those issues at the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council, to be held on 4 and 5 July 1991.

C. African economic recovery and development

17. The economic situation in Africa continues to be a matter of serious concern not only to Africa, but also to the international community and the United Nations system in particular. The sluggish growth of the GDP and the unabated decline in per capita incomes in Africa clearly reveal that economic recovery has not yet taken a firm foothold on the continent and that the reduction of poverty and improvement of living standards still remain elusive objectives.

18. Indeed, poverty has become more rampant in Africa. Currently 270 million Africans, or about half of the continent's population, live in absolute poverty. United Nations projections show that the number of the poor in Africa is likely to increase to 400 million by the end of the century, at a time when poverty is likely to be reduced in the rest of the world by 400 million. Prospects for averting this situation and for accelerating growth and development in Africa have been further threatened by a heavy and growing debt burden and declining export earnings and net resource flows. The recent sharp increases in the price of oil as a result of the Gulf crisis are also likely to have serious adverse effects on growth prospects in Africa in 1990 and 1991.

19. Against this background, ACC reviewed major initiatives and actions undertaken by the United Nations system in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1986 to foster recovery and development in Africa.

20. The review by ACC of this issue represents the beginning of the process of the final review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, which will culminate in an assessment to be undertaken by the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

21. ACC observed that even though resources for that purpose had not been as readily available as organizations had hoped, serious attempts had been made by organizations of the system in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Financial resources and programmes and projects in favour of Africa had been increased. In a number of instances, this had been a direct result of the Programme of Action. It had also served to strengthen existing mandates and to focus attention on the need to generate additional initiatives to address the economic problems in Africa. New structures had been set up in some cases, while existing structures had been upgraded in other cases. The number of staff involved in African activities and programmes had been increased and governing bodies of various organizations had been monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action, most of them on a regular basis. Efforts had also been made to improve the quality of modality of assistance and cooperation and to support policy reforms and ease the debt constraint. Much, however, remains to be done in these areas and the emerging consensus on appropriate developmental approaches needed to be translated into operational reality.

22. ACC concluded that the development of Africa was a long-term process that would require concerted actions, first and foremost on the part of the African countries themselves but also their partners, over a long period of time. Coordinated support by the international community, and the United Nations system in particular, must therefore be sustained beyond the Programme of Action. Systematic efforts will continue to be required in mobilization of additional resources, assistance in improving the external environment and dealing with debt and commodity problems, promoting the easing of conditionalities, assistance at more concessional terms and a solution for the mounting debt problems. The United Nations system needed also to place greater emphasis on supporting human-centred self-reliant growth and development in Africa on a sustainable basis. This called, in particular, for supporting efforts to improve the human condition, and promote popular participation in development as well as regional cooperation and integration activities and programmes.

23. ACC recognized the usefulness of inter-agency coordination, monitoring and reporting on the Programme of Action and of keeping African development issues at the forefront of international concerns.

24. Finally, ACC took note of the proposed mechanisms for the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly and the proposed structure and outline of the report of the Secretary-General on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme.

D. Environment and development

25. In 1990 ACC devoted considerable attention to a range of issues related to the environment, including preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and world climate change. ACC is of the view that the United Nations system is capable of ensuring that global environmental

issues are approached in a coordinated manner and within a wide context through the contributions of all organizations concerned.

26. ACC supports all efforts by Governments to integrate environmental considerations into overall as well as sectoral socio-economic development policies. Many United Nations agencies are assisting Governments in these efforts.

27. There is growing recognition that additional financial resources will be required for the implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable development. In this connection, ACC welcomed the establishment of the global Environment Facility and the Multilateral Fund under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

28. ACC welcomed the invitation of the Government of Ireland to host the International Conference on Water and Environment in January 1992. Preparations involving a number of United Nations bodies are well under way under the aegis of the ACC Inter-Secretariat Group for Water Resources, and it is expected the Conference will give an important input into the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development.

29. ACC was also informed of activities to develop a number of international legal instruments on several environment related issues. ACC noted that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was considering a convention on oil pollution preparedness and response. Such a convention would serve to enhance international cooperation in dealing with a marine environmental emergency involving oil.

30. The study on the application of environmental guidelines, which was carried out at the request of ACC, was completed and ACC noted the continued efforts of parts of the United Nations system to continue to develop and apply procedures for assessing possible positive or negative environmental implications of development programmes and policies.

31. Regarding the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, 2/ the ACC noted with satisfaction efforts to assist countries in the development of regional action plans (the Kalahari-Namib region) and in the preparation for the 1992 Conference (Sudano-Sahelian region).

32. ACC reviewed the state of preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and was briefed on the outcome of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, which met in an organizational session in New York from 5 to 16 March 1990 and held its first session at Nairobi from 6 to 31 August 1990.

33. ACC welcomed the effective cooperation between the agencies and the Conference secretariat in the preparatory work for the Conference and expressed its strong commitment to and support for the Conference. It recommended that its members continue to contribute actively to the

preparatory process. In that regard, it was noted that a number of organizations had decided to second a full-time staff member to the secretariat of the Conference to assist the latter in implementing its work programme. These and other organizations also assisted the secretariat through participation in the working parties it had established for the preparation of reports requested by the Preparatory Committee.

34. ACC also noted that a number of its members would be holding various meetings with subject matters related directly to concerns of the Conference and considered that the outputs of these meetings should be submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference as useful contributions to the preparatory process.

35. ACC took note of the need for the preparatory process and the Conference to address both development and environment questions in a balanced and interrelated manner and also agreed to the need for the Conference to yield concrete and practical measures with regard to the issues falling within its purview. ACC underlined, inter alia, the importance of questions such as health and population in dealing with the overall problématique of environment and development. ACC also recognized the major importance of such cross-sectoral issues as technology transfer and additional financial resources for developing countries and, in that connection, recommended that its membership contribute actively to the work that the secretariat of the Conference would carry out in respect of these issues.

36. ACC has continuously monitored the rapidly evolving political and public response to the possible impacts of global climate change and ensured, as necessary, full participation of concerned organizations of the United Nations system within the coordinating mechanisms established by WMO and UNEP for that purpose.

37. In particular ACC has been kept informed of the activities and the results of the deliberations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, set up in 1988 by WMO and UNEP. The conclusions of the Panel and of its three Working Groups on the scientific aspects, socio-economic impacts and response strategies, respectively, were reported to the Second World Climate Conference, which was held at Geneva from 29 October to 7 November 1990, and subsequently to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session (see A/45/696 and Add.1).

38. Likewise ACC followed closely the preparations and arrangements for the Second World Climate Conference. It noted that the Conference was to be in two parts, the first being of a scientific and technical nature and the second political, at the ministerial level, and that all concerned bodies of the United Nations system would participate.

39. In addition ACC supported the activities of WMO and UNEP in preparation for negotiations for the development of a framework convention on climate change, for which a first negotiating meeting was to be held in Washington, D.C., in February 1991.

40. ACC intends to keep itself fully informed of and involved in all aspects of climate change and especially as regards the possible socio-economic impacts particularly in the developing world, and the development of the framework convention on climate change and its subsequent protocols. ACC urged all relevant organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to be involved and contribute fully, within their areas of expertise and available resources, to follow up the Climate Conference, including support for the preparation of a climate convention and to the Panel.

E. Drug abuse control

41. The need to forge a global effort to fight the most pervasive of world crises - the spiralling crisis of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances - first taken up collectively by ACC in 1989 was once again stressed by ACC at its first regular session of 1990.

42. The sheer volume of drug profits, estimated at $500 billion a year, has subverted national economies and even surpassed the national budgets of some countries. Money laundering, the drug trade's corollary, has become a runaway transnational industry; educated guesses place the amount laundered from drug sales at an annual $100 billion in the United States alone.

43. While the ACC did not on this occasion adopt a statement on the subject, it did conduct a wide ranging review of the latest developments in strengthening international cooperation to fight the vertiginous escalation of this global problem. These include the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to international cooperation in drug abuse control, held from 20 to 23 February; the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, organized by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and held from 9 to 11 April (see A/45/262), in cooperation with the United Nations Office at Vienna, and which the Secretary-General and the executive heads of a number of main United Nations agencies and organizations concerned attended; and the actions under way to enhance and unify the structures of the core programme for drug abuse control in the United Nations itself, which led to adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 45/179 on the enhancement of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control.

44. It was recognized that further new and important responsibilities devolved upon many parts of the United Nations system, as well as the United Nations, as a result of the Global Programme of Action agreed by the General Assembly at its special session, which itself incorporated many of the features of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control 3/ adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in 1987, on which work was already under way. There was a lively exchange of views as to how best to carry out those activities and ensure that they were coordinated and complementary. Much attention centred on an innovative new instrument that has been developed by

the subsidiary body of ACC, the Inter-Agency Meeting on Coordination Matters of International Drug Abuse Control, for this purpose and endorsed by the General Assembly: the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control. All agreed that the Plan provided a handy ready reference compendium, for Governments and organizations alike, of the mandates given to each organization, the actions being taken by each and every one of them to carry them out, and the resources available and required in each case in order to do so. While recognizing that the Plan, given its novelty, complexity and the record time in which it had been prepared, would need subsequently to be progressively revised and improved, it was submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Economic and Social Council.

45. The ACC also noted that the Plan clearly indicated the resource gap that must be bridged if the United Nations system was to fulfil the responsibilities assigned to it effectively. It reaffirmed its view that the fight against this multi-million dollar racket not only required political consciousness to enhance the United Nations role and capacity to fight the drug scourge, but also sufficient resources.

46. In recent years, the United Nations has been a catalyst for the adoption of a host of internationally agreed plans and legal instruments that provide the guidelines for a concerted global strategy to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The calls for the implementation and follow-up of those action plans have placed additional burdens on the staff and already depleted resources of United Nations drug control bodies.

47. It was emphasized that the task of the United Nations would be extremely difficult if not impossible because of the scarcity of resources. At the close of its discussion ACC reached a clear consensus that high priority be given to United Nations activities in drug abuse control.

48. Subsequently the second meeting of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Coordination in Matters of International Drug Abuse Control was held at the headquarters of ILO in Geneva from 12 to 14 September 1990. That Meeting revised the System-Wide Action Plan in the light of the comments of member States at CPC and the Council; it also had, inter alia, substantive discussions on the activities of ILO in drug abuse control, as well as on comparative experiences in methods of reducing demand for drugs.

F. Women and development

49. Improving the role of women in development is an important means of promoting equality between the sexes. It also has the effect of accelerating progress, improving the level of national production and making development more responsive to human needs. The concept of "women and development" began to receive increased international attention around 1970, when the hidden potential and unmeasured contribution of women as economic contributors began to be uncovered from under layers of social and economic myth. At the same time it was becoming increasingly evident that women were not benefiting from

the development process to an equitable extent and that special measures would be needed to ensure this.

50. The General Assembly's proclamation in its resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972 of International Women's Year in 1975 was a turning point in changing stereotyped concepts on the place, role and position of women in society. Recognition of women's role in development resulted in the incorporation of special provisions into the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1980s). The cause of women's advancement received further momentum with the General Assembly's adoption in 1985 of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. To implement those strategies on a coordinated basis, ACC took the lead in developing a system-wide medium-term plan on women and development for the period 1990-1995. The plan formally came into effect in 1990. It has already affected the preparation of the plans and programmes of the individual organizations and monitoring reports are being prepared regularly on it.

51. At its first regular session of 1990, ACC considered a paper on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Strategies, five years after their adoption by the Assembly. The paper was based on discussions at the 1990 annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women, at which it was recognized that there had been a loss of impetus and even stagnation in the progress of implementation of the Strategies. The Commission stressed that the pace of implementation had to be stepped up in the crucial last decade of this century in order to achieve the goals by the year 2000. It also adopted 24 recommendations in the areas of equality, development and peace (see Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15, annex).

52. The fourteenth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women (Vienna, 12-13 March 1990) discussed the recommendations and suggested that they be brought to the attention of ACC, in particular those calling for measures to convert de jure equality into de facto equality that would enable women to know and exercise their rights; an increase in the number of women in decision-making positions at the national and international level, in both public and private sectors (national targets of 30 per cent for women in leadership positions were recommended); the establishment of targets for increasing the number of women in delegations to negotiate international agreements relating to peace and disarmament; the elimination of female illiteracy; training of women in the agricultural sector so as to integrate them into mainstream development programmes; women's access to health services; efforts to reduce women's occupational health hazards; and measures to deal with the issue of violence against women in the family, the work place and society.

53. In a statement adopted at its May 1990 session (ACC decision 1990/2), ACC recognized the need for the international community to accelerate the pace of progress in the implementation of the Forward-looking Strategies and considered that the actions taken during the 1990s would be decisive in terms

of achieving the objective of equality. It felt that the advancement of women should be an integral component of other system-wide priorities in the 1990s. ACC members reaffirmed their commitment to ensure that advancement of women would be a strong policy priority within their organizations. Among those objectives, emphasis was placed on the improvement of the status of women within the respective secretariats and improved monitoring of the impact of programmes on women.

G. Operational activities for development

54. The work of the ACC and its subsidiary body CCSQ (OPS) continued to focus on efforts to improve the overall coherence, cost effectiveness and impact of operational activities, with particular emphasis on field level coordination arrangements. The implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/211, of 22 December 1989, including the annual report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation (A/45/273-E/1990/85 and Add.1-5) has been a major concern of the Committee.

55. The main issues addressed during the period and the action taken thereon, are set out in the following paragraphs.

1. Goals and strategies for the 1990s

56. In pursuance of its resolution 32/197, the Assembly, in paragraph 33 of the annex to its resolution 41/171, had called for the provision of a general framework of broad objectives for the operational activities of the United Nations system.

57. Pending the adoption of the fourth international development strategy by the Assembly, the Committee reviewed the experience of its members in establishing and applying goals and strategies for operational activities. It emphasized the importance of enhanced coherence and collaboration around common goals, placing particular emphasis on the human dimension of development and on poverty eradication, as well as on long-term development objectives.

58. With the anticipated adoption of the strategy, the Committee turned its attention to elaborating its operational implications, in the light of both the work already done by various organizations and other related developments, including the UNDP report on human development, and the World Bank's development reports, and the conclusions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the Programme of Action adopted by it. That phase of the exercise would also examine how at the country level the system could achieve a better mobilization and integration of its support for and technical advice on human development related issues in order to promote a more participatory approach in support of national strategies, especially in implementing anti-poverty programmes, and especially in the least developed countries to improve the availability of statistical data at the country level for monitoring purposes.

2. Programming of the operational activities of the United Nations system

59. Pursuant to paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 42/196 and paragraph 17 of resolution 44/211, the Committee reached broad agreement on guidelines for enhancing programming processes, including measures to better ensure an integrated response to the requirements of recipient Governments, which it proposes to finalize and transmit to the relevant headquarters and field staffs of member organizations.

3. Enhancing the role and effectiveness of the resident coordinator system

60. In pursuance of paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 42/196 and paragraph 15 of resolution 44/211, the Committee adopted a consolidated text of decisions on a range of measures to enhance the role and effectiveness of the resident coordinator system (see A/45/273/Add.3-E/1990/85/Add.3). The decisions have been transmitted by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation to resident coordinators and have, or are being, transmitted by member organizations to their respective field representatives and relevant headquarters staff. Some of the measures, such as the modified clearance procedures for the appointment/designation of UNDP resident representatives/resident coordinators, and the guidelines for briefing of resident coordinators have already been applied with the desired results, while the training programme on the management of field coordination for senior field representatives has been finalized and is to be implemented beginning March 1991. The Committee has also adopted broad indicative criteria for the selection of field representatives of individual organizations, having previously adopted them in respect of resident coordinators, and it has also adopted an interorganizational position reflecting its commitment to the sharing of common premises and services.

4. Strengthening and enhancing utilization of national capacities

61. The Committee also discussed and agreed on a preliminary basis on a common position on measures to strengthen and enhance the utilization of national capacities and national execution. In doing so it reiterated the importance the system attaches to the subject, in pursuance also of the objectives outlined in paragraphs 18 and 19 of General Assembly resolution 44/211. The Committee has sought to ensure that the operational activities of the system are directed to promoting self reliance and that the nature of the assistance and relationships between the development partners respond to evolving needs and circumstances.

5. Field structures

62. The Committee gave preliminary consideration to questions relating to the provision of multidisciplinary advice, to decentralization and to their implications for the field structures of organizations, and it proposes to elaborate an interorganizational response to paragraphs 15, 16 and 23 of General Assembly resolution 44/211 in the light of the report the Director-General is required by the Assembly in that resolution to undertake.

6. Procurement from developing and major underutilized donor countries

63. The Committee agreed on a common position reflecting its commitment to enhanced procurement from those two groups of countries, on measures it has taken or has under consideration, on the constraints organizations face, as well as on measures the concerned countries could themselves take to the same end. The common position includes agreement that while the setting of annual procurement targets for the two groups of countries may have some merit, it would be difficult to set targets by agency, region or country. However, better information on and the greater availability of quality products that could compete on the open market could contribute significantly to enhancing procurement from those countries. Particular note was taken of the fact that some organizations were involved in highly specialized products that were only available in a limited number of countries. The Committee is currently engaged in preparing common guidelines for all relevant headquarters and field staff.

7. Preparations for the new UNDP successor support costs arrangements

64. Questions relating to the new system of agency support costs to be introduced by UNDP for its fifth programming cycle, beginning in 1992, were the subject of intensive discussion among members of ACC throughout the period covered by this report, and consultations on the implementation of the relevant decision of the Governing Council of UNDP (90/26 of 22 June 1990) were expected to continue in 1991. In the framework of the ACC machinery, general policy responsibility for those discussions and consultations was entrusted to a task force of CCSQ (OPS), while related financial issues were considered in CCAQ.

65. The CCSQ (OPS) Task Force on Support Costs has been dealing directly with the various aspects of this complex issue, with a view to facilitating the process of consultations through a joint approach of the organizations involved, leading to an eventual consensus on the final package to be adopted by the UNDP Governing Council.

8. Local and recurrent costs

66. The Committee agreed on a summary of an interorganizational position in the light of an earlier consideration of the subject. It sets out broad guidelines for ensuring that inadequate local cost funding and a lack of attention to the recurrent cost implications of activities supported by the United Nations system do not reduce the quality and effectiveness of projects and pose a threat to their sustainability.

9. Environmental assessment guidelines

67. A consultancy report on the subject, which ACC had discussed in draft, has been finalized and widely distributed. Members are now taking appropriate follow-up action on its recommendations.

II. PROGRAMME ISSUES

68. In 1990 ACC decided to reconvene its Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) to address three tasks: (a) the question of providing in the ACC annual overview report information on the programmes and resources of the organizations of the system; (b) preliminary discussion as to how to approach the harmonization of programme budget and medium-term plan cycles in the United Nations system; and (c) the ACC contribution to the thematic analyses to be prepared for future sessions of the Economic and Social Council. CCSQ (PROG) met in Geneva from 11 to 13 July 1990 and held an informal joint meeting with CCAQ (FB) from 17 to 19 September 1990 in New York. CCSQ (PROG) took the following actions regarding the tasks assigned to it.

A. Preparation of the ACC report on programmes and resources of the organizations of the system

69. In response to various requests from intergovernmental bodies, CCSQ (PROG), in consultation with CCAQ (FB), developed a prototype of a new ACC report on programmes and resources of organizations of the system that was presented to the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC. The Joint Meetings concluded that the prototype constituted a good basis on which ACC could proceed to prepare the first report on programmes and resources, which is found in addendum I to the present report.

70. In connection with the new report on programmes on resources, it was agreed that it would be desirable to update and revise the ACC programme classification and initial steps were taken to begin the revision.

71. CCSQ (PROG) recognized that a central database or a means of central access to the databases of the organizations of the system on resources and programmes would be an effective way of responding to the concerns of Member States concerning the availability of system-wide information and decided to

examine systematically the implications of the possible establishment of such a database or central means of access.

B. Harmonization of programme budget and medium-term plan cycles

72. CCSQ (PROG) discussed and reached conclusions regarding two aspects of harmonization: (a) the current status of the procedures for prior consultations on medium-term plans and equivalent documents and (b) the planning cycles currently used in the system.

73. The Committee emphasized that prior consultations on plan and programme documents remained a very useful tool for coordination. Current agreed procedures for prior consultations remained valid although there might be a need to review and streamline some of them.

74. Regarding the harmonization of planning cycles, CCSQ (PROG) agreed that the synchronization of planning and programming cycles, while presenting certain advantages, was not an indispensable tool for coordination and was certainly not an end in itself. Coordination of policies at a global level can be assured, including through ACC, even though there are different planning cycles and an absence of formal planning procedures in a number of agencies. Furthermore, coordination of specific programmes and activities can equally be ensured in spite of different cycles, notably through the ACC subsidiary machinery, the relevant intergovernmental organs and bilateral or multilateral consultations.

75. The efforts towards harmonization of planning and programming procedures and techniques, however, is of particular importance, both for the organizations and agencies of the system and for the central intergovernmental bodies. The Committee believed that it would be desirable to review the various aspects of the relationships between plans and programmes of individual organizations and mandated system-wide plans and programmes.

C. Thematic analyses for sessions of the Economic and Social Council

76. CCSQ (PROG) considered its role, on behalf of the United Nations system, in the preparation of thematic analyses for the Economic and Social Council as called for in Council resolutions 1988/77 and 1989/114. CCSQ (PROG) was of the view that such analyses would be useful in assisting the Council in its policy-making and coordinating functions. They should contain solid analyses of substantive issues and actively involve the organizations of the system in their preparations. CCSQ (PROG) will return to this topic in the light of future developments.

III. FINANCIAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PERSONNEL ISSUES

A. Personnel and general administrative issues

1. Comprehensive review

77. In 1990, ACC focused on two aspects of the comprehensive review of conditions of employment of staff in the Professional and higher categories: (a) the completion of the review itself, and (b) the implementation of the decisions taken by the General Assembly in 1989 (Assembly resolution 44/198).

78. In reviewing progress with the review in 1989, ACC recognized that the measures approved were designed to enhance competitiveness and improve conditions of employment in the United Nations common system. ACC remained concerned, however, for the ongoing instability of those employment conditions and, in its decision 1990/19, endorsed all those proposals of the International Civil Service Commission and of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board that would further enhance competitiveness and provide for the evolution of the remuneration and pension system in a stable, comprehensible and predictable manner. It also urged ICSC to devise a way of ensuring that post adjustment would move smoothly in coming years and would not be subjected to the "stop-go" phenomenon that had characterized the salary system in recent years and that could again be exacerbated by another freeze on post adjustment in 1991.

79. The General Assembly acknowledged that concern and in section VII of its resolution 45/241 of 21 December 1990 requested ICSC to present recommendations in 1991 "with a view to avoiding a future prolonged freeze of post adjustment within the five-year period beginning in calendar year 1990".

80. Through CCAQ, it was possible to obtain a high degree of harmonization in the implementation of the decisions reached by the Assembly in 1989 as part of the comprehensive review. This was particularly important in the context of the new allowance for hardship and mobility that has been successfully introduced in the organizations of the common system.

2. Functioning of the International Civil Service Commission

81. In response to the General Assembly's request in paragraph 1 of section II of its resolution 44/198 to the Secretary-General, together with his colleagues in ACC, to review the functioning of the Commission, a discussion paper was presented by CCAQ to ACC at its second session in 1990 outlining the five main areas that would form the core of the report to the Assembly of ACC on the subject in 1991. In this paper, CCAQ submitted that the overall goals of the review must be to strengthen the institution and to restore, where necessary, the delicate balance contained in its statute. The important question of whether or not the statute itself should be reopened was not considered, as it was felt that the issues raised should be considered on their own merits and only thereafter should the implications of the recommendations of ACC, in terms of statutory change, be reviewed.

82. The five areas for further study were the following:

(a) The nature of the Commission as an independent body of experts;

(b) The relationship with the Assembly and the governing bodies and executive heads of the other organizations of the common system;

(c) The work programme of the Commission;

(d) The appointment and organization of the secretariat;

(e) The Commission's size and location.

83. The Assembly, in paragraph 4 of section II of resolution 45/241, further requested the Secretary-General and ACC, in preparing the report on the functioning of ICSC, to recommend alternative measures to improve the Commission's functioning. Such recommendations will be incorporated in the final report of ACC.

3. Other matters

84. Included among the many other issues covered by CCAQ and reported to ACC in the course of 1990 were the following:

(a) The status of women within the United Nations common system and special measures for the recruitment of women;

(b) Pensionable remuneration levels of staff in both the Professional and higher and the General Service and related categories;

(c) A series of issues related to service in the field (e.g. security, medical evacuation);

(d) Job classification matters, including the common classification standard for small and medium-sized duty stations.

85. ACC called for a special report on the standard of accommodation for travel by air, which CCAQ had studied in the context of a recommendation by the United Nations common system medical directors to the effect that all air travel of five hours or more should be in business class.

86. The consensus of CCAQ, as reported to ACC, was that travel in "economy" or "tourist" class was not appropriate, at least on official business, but recalled also that the introduction of changes in existing practices would mean - at least in some organizations - reference to their legislative bodies.

B. Financial issues

1. Financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system

87. The cash position of a number of the organizations of the United Nations system, which had been the subject of a statement by ACC in 1989, continued to be critical during most of the year 1990. As at 30 June 1990, accumulated arrearages of assessed contributions for all organizations amounted to nearly $US 800 million. As at the same date the organizations of the system were in receipt of less than half of assessed contributions for calendar year 1990. Non-payment and delayed payment of assessed contributions made it necessary for some organizations to take exceptional financial management measures and, more important, to curtail activities to the detriment of both current operations and basic infrastructures.

88. The regular sessions of CCAQ on financial and budgetary questions provided an opportunity for financial managers of member organizations of ACC to examine the financial status and prospects of each organization and to inform themselves of action taken or envisaged in each case. CCAQ also collected and published information on the payment performance in each organization of each of the large contributors under the regular budget of the United Nations. While the outlook for the collection of assessed contributions improved in the last part of the year, CCAQ intended to maintain these arrangements as a means of keeping the situation under review.

2. Budgeting methods

89. Over the years ACC has formulated a number of recommendations on budgeting methods for the guidance of organizations of the system with a view to promoting compatibility and transparency in their budget documents and general adherence to accepted standards. The recommendations of ACC have dealt, among other things, with the presentation of programme budgets, common objects of expenditure and techniques of budgeting for currency instability and inflation.

90. In 1990, ACC studied in some depth the Joint Inspection Unit's report entitled "Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system" (A/45/130) and subsequently drew up comments which were placed before the General Assembly (A/45/130/Add.1). As indicated in its comments, ACC found that the report, and in particular the comparative tables in volume II, would be a useful source of reference as efforts continued to enhance the comparability of budgets and the harmonization of budgeting methods and techniques in the system. ACC also noted that the Inspector had recognized the unavoidable limits placed on such efforts by the specificity of organizations' mandates, structures and activities and the resulting different requirements of their governing bodies.

3. Cost of health insurance

91. ACC had noted in 1989 that the cost of contributions by the organizations to health insurance schemes was escalating and could be expected to continue to do so. In those circumstances it was agreed that the evolution of such expenses would call for continuing scrutiny by financial managers in the framework of CCAQ.

92. In 1990 CCAQ proceeded with the collection of statistical data designed to show the extent of health insurance costs in the various organizations and, in order to facilitate evaluation of the figures, the main characteristics of their health insurance schemes. It decided to pursue the collection and refinement of such data in 1991. On the basis of that information, financial managers in individual organizations were expected to take advantage of experience throughout the system in considering any cost-containment measures that might be required.

4. Support costs

93. A matter of particular concern from the point of view of financial management was that of measuring the costs incurred for various types of support operations in the five largest executing agencies to which the new support-cost regime was expected to apply. Data on those costs were required both to establish rates for support services and for purposes of financial control and reporting. ACC considered that although the prevailing financial climate would not permit organizations to devote resources to comprehensive and continuing cost-measurement systems, a cost survey in the organizations concerned might usefully be undertaken by an independent firm recognized for expertise in the field of cost accounting. The findings could be updated from time to time. Arrangements for such a survey were accordingly made under UNDP auspices, and final results were expected to be available at the end of 1991. The results available on an interim basis were to be submitted to the Governing Council of UNDP, as requested by it, in June 1991.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

94. During the year under review, ACC continued to monitor developments in a number of areas in which action by the United Nations system was required. Included in the matters kept under review by ACC were activities of the organizations of the system related to international meetings, years, decades and anniversaries declared by the United Nations. Among the areas which received particular attention were the following:

(a) Prevention and control of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS): ACC has kept the situation with regard to the prevention and control of AIDS under review since 1987. In 1990 ACC was informed by WHO that the frequency of infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, was accelerating dramatically in some parts of the world; between 8 and 10 million adults had

already been infected. Moreover, the growing heterosexual transmission of AIDS was causing an increasing global problem among women who, in turn, passed the infection to their new-born babies. By the year 2000, 10 million or more infants and children would have been infected, the majority of whom would die of AIDS. An international conference on women, children and AIDS co-sponsored by a number of United Nations agencies issued the Paris Declaration setting out ways and means of combating this trend. Progress had been made in evaluating drugs to treat AIDS patients and first trials of candidate vaccines would begin within two to three years. Progress was also being made in mobilizing the knowledge and skills of the various bodies of the United Nations system, as a whole, to confront the social, economic and humanitarian dimensions of AIDS through such institutions as the Inter-Agency Advisory Group on AIDS, the WHO/UNDP Alliance to combat AIDS at the country level, and the United Nations Steering Committee on AIDS.

(b) International conference on nutrition: At its second regular session of 1989, ACC welcomed the joint initiative of FAO and WHO to convene an international conference on nutrition in 1992 (decision 1989/25). The purpose of the conference is to focus world-wide attention on this important aspect of development. In 1990 ACC was informed of the latest developments regarding the conference which was also the topic of a special session of the ACC Subcommittee on Nutrition, held from 24 to 26 July 1990.

(c) Accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant: At its first regular session of 1990, ACC discussed inter-agency cooperation for addressing the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. In its decision 1990/5, ACC took note of the major international project to assess the radiological consequences of the Chernobyl accident and to evaluate the measures taken so far to mitigate them, identified the composition of an inter-agency mission to be dispatched to the area and requested member organizations of the mission, on behalf of ACC, to assist the Secretary-General to prepare proposals for a programme of international cooperation for the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. In response to General Assembly resolution 45/190, ACC will continue to develop coordinated programmes to deal with the consequences of the accident.

(d) Assistance to Namibia: ACC reviewed assistance to Namibia by the organizations of the United Nations system at its second regular session of 1990. In decision 1990/18, ACC decided to assign to its Organizational Committee the responsibility for keeping under review the provision of assistance to Namibia. ACC would return to this question at future session.

(e) Implementation of conclusions and recommendations of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC.

95. The General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 45/254 B of 21 December 1990, requested that the annual overview report of the ACC include a section on the measures taken or envisaged to implement the conclusions and recommendations of the CPC and of the Joint Meeting of the two committees.

96. At the first part of its thirtieth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination adopted a number of conclusions and recommendations regarding strengthening of coordination in the United Nations system. 4/ ACC was fully in agreement with the general intent and content of those conclusions and recommendations, and actions have been initiated to ensure that they were taken into account by ACC and its subsidiary bodies. Specific suggestions concerning the annual overview report of ACC have been borne in mind in the preparation of the present report. The recommendation that the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC should consider information to be presented to them on a prototype for a revised annual overview report of ACC has been carried out. The twenty-fifth series of the Joint Meetings found the prototype to constitute an acceptable basis on which to proceed.

97. Regarding the conclusions and recommendations concerning the Joint Meetings, the members of ACC made all efforts to be represented at the level of executive heads at the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings. The Secretary-General had, as suggested, communicated with the executive heads of organizations of the system and encouraged them to actively participate in the Joint Meetings in the future.

98. The report of the Chairmen of the twenty-fourth series of Joint Meetings held in October 1989 (see E/1990/123) contains conclusions and recommendations relating to coordination in general and to the two topics addressed: preparation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade and drug abuse control. Measures taken to implement all these recommendations are described in a conference room paper presented to the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings held in October of 1990 ("Implementation of the Recommendations of the Twenty-fourth Series of Joint Meetings of the Committee on Programme Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination", Conference Room Paper No. 3).

99. The report of the Chairmen of the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings contains conclusions and recommendations relating to improvement of coordination in the United Nations system and to natural disaster reduction.

100. Regarding improvement of coordination in the United Nations system, most of the conclusions and recommendations are of a general nature. ACC, for its part, is fully committed to improving coordination along the lines agreed to at the Joint Meetings. ACC is proceeding to implement the specific recommendations relating to the annual overview report of ACC, the provision of information on programmes and resources of organizations of the system and system-wide communication and information.

101. Many of the conclusions and recommendations concerning natural disaster reduction are addressed to Member States or to individual organizations. The organizations of the system are committed to making greater efforts to address disaster prevention and mitigation as part of the development process. The United Nations system is prepared to continue to play a catalytic and supporting role. All efforts will be made to take maximum advantage of

existing substantive capacities. Several inter-agency meetings to review implementation of activities in support of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction have been held and more are planned. Steps have been taken to strengthen UNDRO in line with General Assembly resolution 45/221 of 21 December 1990, and the Secretary-General has taken measures to ensure that voluntary financial support is mobilized to ensure the implementation of the activities of the Decade. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation is fully committed to continuing to serve as a focal point for overseeing and coordinating the programmes and activities of the United Nations system during the Decade.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, Nairobi, 29 August-9 September 1977 (A/CONF.74/36), chap. I.

3/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18), chap. I, sect. A.

4/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/45/16), part one.

existing substantive capacities. Several inter-agency meetings to review implementation of activities in support of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction have been held and more are planned. Steps have been taken to strengthen UNDRO in line with General Assembly resolution 45/221 of 21 December 1990, and the Secretary-General has taken measures to ensure that voluntary financial support is mobilized to ensure the implementation of the activities of the Decade. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation is fully committed to continuing to serve as a focal point for overseeing and coordinating the programmes and activities of the United Nations system during the Decade.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

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3/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18), chap. I, sect. A.

4/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/45/16), part one.

1990/19 Statement on personnel issues

1990/20 Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

1990/21 Appointment of Coordinator for the Seville Exposition

1990/22 First regular session of 1991 of the Administrative Committee on Coordination

Annex II

REPORTS, STATEMENTS AND COMMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES IN 1990

Document symbol	Title or description
E/1990/18 and Add.1	Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1989
A/C.5/45/43	ACC statement on personnel issues
E/1990/123	Report of the Chairmen of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings of the two Committees
A/45/76/Add.1-E/1990/10/Add.1	Comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on "Evaluation of rural development activities of the United Nations system in three least developed countries" (JIU/REP/89/2)
A/45/113/Add.1	Comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on "Human resource development through technical cooperation" (A/45/113)
A/45/648	Comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on "Practices and procedures aimed at more equitable geographical distribution of sources of procurement for technical cooperation projects" (A/44/646)
A/45/130/Add.1	Comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on "Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system" (A/45/130)

Annex III

MEETINGS CONVENED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION IN 1990

Dates	Venue	Title of the meeting
5 February 1990	Vienna	Ad hoc inter-agency meeting on coordination in matters of international drug abuse control a/
12-15 February	New York	Organizational Committee of ACC
26 February-16 March	New York	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) b/ (seventy-second session)
12-13 March	Vienna	Ad hoc inter-agency meeting on women c/ (14th meeting)
19-23 February	Paris (UNESCO headquarters)	Subcommittee on Nutrition (sixteenth session)
19-23 March	Paris (UNESCO headquarters)	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (seventy-second session)
26-27 March and 2 April	New York	Inter-agency Group on New and Renewable Sources of Energy d/ (ninth session)
26-29 March	Geneva	Task Force on Long-term Development Objectives (nineteenth session)
2-5 April	Geneva (WIPO headquarters)	Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) (first regular session)
9-11 April and 4 May	Vienna	Organizational Committee of ACC
2-4 May	Vienna	Administrative Committee on Coordination (first regular session)
2-4 May	Rome (FAO headquarters)	Task Force on Rural Development (eighteenth session)

Dates	Venue	Title of the meeting
7-9 May	New York	Task Force on Science and Technology for Development (eleventh session)
6-8 June	New York	Ad hoc inter-agency working group on demographic estimates and projections (sixteenth session)
18-22 June	Vienna	Subcommittee on Statistical Activities (twenty-fourth session)
21-22 June	Geneva	Joint United Nations Information Committee (sixteenth session)
2-27 July	Geneva (ILO headquarters)	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) e/
11-13 July	Geneva	Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters)
19 July	Geneva	Informal meeting of the Organizational Committee of ACC
24-26 July	Geneva (WHO headquarters)	Sub-Committee on Nutrition (seventeenth session)
10-14 September	New York	Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (seventy-third session)
12-14 September	Geneva	Ad hoc inter-agency meeting on coordination in matters of international drug abuse control
17-19 September	New York	Informal Joint Working Group of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme Matters) and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions)
26-28 September	Rome (FAO headquarters)	Ad hoc inter-agency meeting on outer space activities
3-5 October	Geneva (WMO headquarters)	Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources f/ (eleventh session)

Dates	Venue	Title of the meeting
2-4 October	New York	Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) (second regular session)
8-10 October and 23 October	New York	Organizational Committee of ACC
22-23 October	New York	Administrative Committee on Coordination (second regular session)
5-7 December	Vienna	Inter-agency meeting on United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (eighth session)

Notes

a/ In conjunction with the eleventh special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

b/ In conjunction with the thirty-first session of ICSC (New York, 5-23 March 1990).

c/ Immediately following the thirty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

d/ In conjunction with the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (26 March-4 April 1990).

e/ In conjunction with the thirty-second session of the ICSC (New York, 9 July-3 August 1990).

f/ Following the 18th meeting of the Steering Committee for Cooperative Action for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

Annex IV

DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION IN 1990

ACC/1990/1	Programme of work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1990
ACC/1990/2	Summary of conclusions, Organizational Committee (New York, 12-15 February 1990)
ACC/1990/2/Add.1	Summary of conclusions, Organizational Committee (Vienna, 9-11 April and 4 May 1990)
ACC/1990/2/Add.2	Summary of conclusions, Organizational Committee (New York, 8-10 and 23 October 1990)
ACC/1990/3	Monitoring of the programme of work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1990 (Vienna, 9-11 April 1990)
ACC/1990/3/Add.1	Monitoring of the programme of work of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1990 (New York, 8-10 and 23 October 1990)
ACC/1990/4	Report of the seventy-second session of CCAQ (PER) (New York, 26 February-16 March 1990)
ACC/1990/4/Add.1	Report of the seventy-second session of CCAQ (PER) (Arrangements for the introduction of revised provisions relating to mobility and hardship effective 1 July 1990) (New York, 26 February-16 March 1990)
ACC/1990/5	Report of the seventy-second session of CCAQ (FB) (Paris, 19-23 March 1990)
ACC/1990/6	Provisional annotated agenda, ACC, first regular session of 1990 (Vienna, 2-4 May 1990)
ACC/1990/7	Report of CCSQ (OPS) on its first regular session of 1990 (Geneva, 2-5 April 1990)
ACC/1990/8	Report of the Task Force on Long-term Development Objectives on its nineteenth session (Geneva, 26-29 March 1990)
ACC/1990/9	Report of CCSQ (PROG) (Geneva, 11-13 July 1990)
ACC/1990/10	Report of the seventy-third session of CCAQ (PER) (Geneva, 2-27 July 1990)

ACC/1990/11	Report of the sixteenth session of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (Geneva, 21-22 June 1990)
ACC/1990/12	Report of the seventy-third session of CCAQ (FB) (New York, 10-14 September 1990)
ACC/1990/13	Report of the Informal Joint Working Group of CCSQ (PROG) and CCAQ (FB) (New York, 17-19 September 1990)
ACC/1990/14	Report of CCSQ (OPS) on its second regular session of 1990 (New York, 2-4 October 1990)
ACC/1990/15	Provisional annotated agenda of ACC, second regular session of 1990 (New York, 22-23 October 1990)

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ACC/1990/DEC/1-14	Decisions adopted by ACC at its first regular session of 1990
ACC/1990/DEC/15-22 and Corr.1	Decisions adopted by ACC at its second regular session of 1990